

1. In a network system that connects a central location with a large number of network devices, a method for balancing the coordination of responses to connection requests originating at the network devices comprising the steps of:

sending a connection request message from a specific network device to the central location through the router indicated by a received router availability message, and only in response to receiving a router availability message at the specific network device;

reassigning connection requests from a specific network device to a router under control of the central location, so that connection requests remain distributed among a number of available routers.

3. A method as in claim 1 wherein the messages are connection request messages originating from a network devices requesting that a connection be made to the central location.

4. A method as in claim 1 wherein the router availability message indicates a network address at which the network device may respond.

5. A method as in claim 1 wherein the router availability message is sent as a multicast message to a specific group of network devices.
6. A method as in claim 1 wherein the router availability message represents a right for the network device to connect to the router for a limited time only.